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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application No. : 09/676,835
Inventor : Merrill et al.
Filing Date : October 2, 2000
T.C./A.U. : 1654
Examiner : Michael V. Meller

Confirmation No.: 4143

Docket No. : 18085.105300
Customer No. : 20786

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Commissioner for Patents
Mail Stop AF
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE

September 29, 2003

Sir:

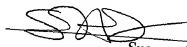
Responsive to the Final Official Action mailed July 29, 2003, please enter the following amendments and kindly consider the appended remarks. Applicants do not believe any fee to be due, however, if the Commissioner determines that a fee is due, please charge Deposit Account No. 11-0980.

Amendments to the claims are reflected in the listing of claims, beginning on page 2 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 5 of this paper.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 CFR 1.8a)

I hereby certify that this Amendment and Response to Office Action, along with any paper referred to as being attached or enclosed, is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop AF, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.


Susanne Hollinger